

REMARKS

This is in response to the Restriction Requirement mailed on January 5, 2005.

Claims 1 and 19 are amended. Claims 24 – 48 are cancelled without prejudice or disclaimer. Claims 49 – 51 are added. As a result, claims 1-23 and 49-51 are now pending in this patent application.

Information Disclosure Statement

Applicant is submitting an information disclosure statement herewith. Applicant respectfully requests that the Examiner consider the references provided with the accompanying Information Disclosure Statement and that an initialed copy of the Form 1449 be returned with the next official communication.

Election of Claims

In response to the Restriction Requirement mailed on January 5, 2005, Applicant elects Group I (claims 1-18), for immediate prosecution. Accordingly, Applicant hereby cancels claims 24-48 (Groups III – VII) without prejudice or disclaimer. Applicant reserves the right to reintroduce such cancelled claims in one or more divisional applications.

Applicant respectfully traverses the restriction between Groups I and II, and respectfully requests that the Examiner reconsider whether the claims of Group II can reasonably be examined together with the claims of Group I. Applicant has amended independent claim 1 of Group I to include the functional language present in independent claim 19 of Group II. Therefore, Applicant respectfully submits that it is not an undue burden to examine Group I and Group II together.

Alternatively, Applicant respectfully submits that Group II is related to Group I as a process, and an apparatus for its practice. See MPEP § 806.05(e). According to the MPEP, “If the apparatus claims include a claim to “means” for practicing the process, the claim is a linking claim that must be examined with the elected invention. If it is ultimately allowed, rejoinder is required.” See *id.* Accordingly, Applicant has added linking claim 51, which Applicant

respectfully submits must be examined along with the elected Group I claims. If linking claim 51 is allowed, then Applicant respectfully submits that the Group II claims be rejoined at that time.

Claim Amendments and New claims

Applicant has amended claims 1 and 19 to more particularly point out and distinctly claim certain aspects of the invention. Applicant believes that these claim amendments are fully supported by the specification as originally filed.

Regarding amended claims 1 and 19, Applicant submits that such amendments find support, for example, at originally filed claims 2-4 and 19, and in the specification at page 12, line 19, and at page 17 lines 24-29.

Applicant has added new dependent claims 49-51 to more particularly point out and distinctly claim certain aspects of the invention. Applicant believes that these new claims are fully supported by the specification as originally filed.

Regarding new claim 49, Applicant submits that this new claim finds support, for example, at page 23, line 8 through page 24, line 10.

Regarding new claim 50, Applicant submits that this new claim finds support, for example, at element 602 of FIGS. 6A-6B, for example.

Regarding new claim 51, Applicant submits that this new claim finds support, for example, at originally filed claim 19 and elsewhere within the specification.

CONCLUSION

Applicant respectfully submits that the claims are in condition for allowance and notification to that effect is earnestly requested. The Examiner is invited to telephone Applicant's attorney at (612) 373-6951 to facilitate prosecution of this application.

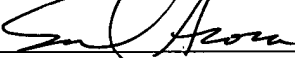
If necessary, please charge any additional fees or credit overpayment to Deposit Account No. 19-0743.

Respectfully Submitted,

ROGER N. JOHNSON

By his Representatives,

SCHWEGMAN, LUNDBERG, WOESSNER & KLUTH, P.A.
P.O. Box 2938
Minneapolis, MN 55402
(612) 373-6951

Date February 7, 2005 By 
Suneel Arora
Reg. No. 42,267

CERTIFICATE UNDER 37 CFR § 1.8: The undersigned hereby certifies that this correspondence is being deposited with the United States Postal Service with sufficient postage as first class mail, in an envelop addressed to: MS Amendment, Commissioner for Patents, P.O. Box 1450, Alexandria, VA 22313-1450, on this 7 day of February 2005.

Name Peter Rebutini

Signature 